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[South Vietnam: South Vietnamese units accounted for most of the enemy's casualties in actions fought mainly in I Corps on 22-23 September.

A South Vietnamese unit moving eastward from Gio Linh on a sweep operation near the Demilitarized Zone has claimed killing nearly 100 North Vietnamese regulars at a cost of three dead and 33 wounded in a seven-hour action. In Quang Tin Province, an enemy battalion has attacked the South Vietnamese military compound in the district seat of Hau Duc, some 50 miles south of Da Nang. The South Vietnamese, who have extensive air support, report killing 91 Communists compared with 14 allied soldiers dead as the fighting continues. Other action in I Corps cost the enemy some 50 killed in a clash near Hoi An and 31 killed in a US sweep operation near Ha Thanh Special Forces camp, west of Quang Ngai city.

In II Corps, South Vietnamese conducting a sweep operation along the Binh Dinh Province coast have made contact with a North Vietnamese battalion and report killing 48 enemy troops at a cost of ten dead as the action continues. Fighting was relatively light elsewhere in the central and southern provinces of the country.

* * * *

The new progovernment front, the Lien Minh, has trained the first 300 of some 900 cadres and is beginning to move ahead with its social welfare program in eight of Saigon's nine precincts. The new cadres are to form people's committees in each precinct to plan and supervise welfare action. Two such committees have reportedly already been formed and are to be announced soon.

The Lien Minh, which has only been in business since 4 July, is giving a high priority to its social]

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[welfare program, which is intended to develop grass-roots support for the government. So far most of its activity has been centered in Saigon, but the front's leadership hopes to have enough new cadres by the end of the year to place them in about ten provinces and outlying cities, where the government most needs to develop new support among the people. [REDACTED]

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Czechoslovakia-USSR: Prague and Moscow are still at considerable odds over what constitutes "normalization."

Jiri Sekera, the newly appointed chief of the Czechoslovak party daily, Rude Pravo, has editorialized that normalization cannot be "compliance with the demands of one side," but can be achieved only "as the result of open, comradely discussions." Sekera has also asserted that the Soviet Union and its allies cannot deny "principles which we regard as just." Josef Smrkovsky, chairman of the National Assembly, has also made the point that the Soviet Union must live up to its obligations.

The Soviet party paper Pravda, however, is still stressing that it is the Czechoslovak side which must live up to the Soviet interpretation of normalization.

[redacted] the Czechoslovak leadership is planning to go to Moscow today, evidently to discuss such differences.

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The Czechoslovak populace continues to acclaim party leader Dubcek. A Socialist Party newspaper reported on 22 September that Dubcek "fans clubs" have been created, people are wearing "Dubcek pins," and towns have been renamed in his honor.

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[redacted] be-
cause Dubcek is regarded as a father figure, he cannot be removed from power at this time.

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[redacted] because of the invaders' animosity Dubcek might voluntarily step down, possibly after the 14th party congress, which is rumored to be scheduled for December.

[redacted] the leading candidate to replace Dubcek is Gustav Husak, now chief of the Slovak Communist Party.

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] most Soviet troops will leave the country by 28 October. In this connection, Rude Pravo, after a day's silence, reported yesterday Cernik's statement that most troops will leave but some would remain. The reason for the deliberate delay in publishing Cernik's statement is not known.

On 20 September the official Polish youth daily Sztandar Mlodych again raised charges of West German complicity in counterrevolutionary activity in Czechoslovakia. Implicating the Sudeten German minority in Western Bohemia, the daily claimed that Warsaw Pact forces had uncovered "many bunkers," some with cached arms, in border area forests. The article also charged that American troops had replaced West German units along the Czechoslovak border and warned that this is "bound to have important consequences for the whole socialist community." [REDACTED]

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Warsaw Pact: Soviet Marshal Yakubovsky, commander in chief of the Warsaw Pact, may be on another tour of loyal allied forces.

Yakubovsky was in Bulgaria last week, and yesterday it was announced that he was in East Germany. In both countries, he met with top party bosses as well as defense chiefs. Brief communiqués on his travels assert that his mission is the strengthening of the "defense preparedness" of the pact. It is possible that Yakubovsky will go on to Poland and Hungary.

Yakubovsky was named commander in chief of the Warsaw Pact forces in March. During April he visited all pact countries except Rumania. He inspected troops in East Germany and Poland just before the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August.

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Yugoslavia: The leadership remains firm but uneasy in the face of intensified Soviet propaganda.

Moscow has now attacked President Tito personally for being soft on counterrevolutionary activities. On 19 September a Pravda article charged that the theory and practice of Yugoslav Communism provided an example which inspired Czechoslovak revisionist elements.

In response, the Yugoslavs have eulogized Tito and emphasized their unity, preparedness, and willingness to resist intervention with military force--themes the leadership has stressed continually since the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Belgrade is nervous, however, because of its inability to get a clear reading of Soviet intentions.

Belgrade is concerned about Moscow's attempts to exploit divisions in Yugoslavia over economic and social reform, as well as the traditional nationalist rivalries. Yugoslav leaders have served notice that domestic opponents of the reform are working in the interests of neo-Stalinism. There have been some trade disruptions, and the Yugoslavs fear even greater economic reprisals from Moscow and its allies.

Meanwhile, the continuance of the tense atmosphere serves Moscow's purpose by forcing Belgrade to maintain a costly military defense posture which reduces the availability of funds for the reform movement. Moscow's hostility, however, as in 1948, has united Yugoslavia, and makes it easier for the leadership to promote its liberal goals. [REDACTED]

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France: No substantial reforms are in prospect for the state-controlled radio and TV system (ORTF).

In last May's crisis, ORTF's 12,000 white-collar workers constituted a major protest group and remained on strike longer than any other union. Although the government is now moving to meet many of the demands of students and labor, the primary goals of ORTF employees--objectivity in programing and freedom from strict government censorship--seem as far from realization as in the prestrike period. Strike leaders have been fired, and promises of reform made during the height of the crisis appear to have been forgotten.

Meaningful reform of the ORTF would require making its governing body, an administrative council, a fully independent agency. At present the council's director general and half its members are political appointees and thus subservient to the regime.

The government's failure to revise this structure is evidence of the political importance the Gaullists attach to controlling these channels of public information. Public apathy on the issue of freedom of information contributes to the continuation of one of the most highly regimented systems of TV programing in Western Europe.

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Peru: More talk of military plotting and a split in the governing party are increasing political tensions.

The latest coup rumors are the result of army commander Velasco's sudden cancellation late last week of a trip out of the country. Velasco also publicly rejected a statement by the air force minister, who had said that the armed forces would not act outside the constitution with regard to the dispute over the government's settlement with the US-owned International Petroleum Company (IPC).

This dispute, meanwhile, has created a split in the governing Popular Action Party. President Belaunde has called for a special congress to reorganize the party after the party's presidential candidate threatened to withdraw his support from the government if the IPC agreement is not nullified.

Although a coup is unlikely at the present time, tensions arising from these developments will probably force changes in the cabinet, with some of the shifts bringing in more military men.

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Bolivia: Student disturbances have continued throughout the country and are taking a more violent turn.

On 19 and 20 September students in La Paz attacked national guard forces with dynamite, Molotov cocktails, and small-arms fire. Several guard members were wounded in the clashes. A worker-student group also attacked a police station and tried to burn it.

The national guard is suffering from fatigue and low morale, aggravated by a shortage of supplies. In some instances it has been reluctant to engage the demonstrators because of fear that the students were better armed.

The student federation in La Paz has declared the university to be in a state of "revolutionary insurgency" and is seeking the support of organized labor. Labor unions have not officially given their support, but the US Embassy reports that there is increased worker participation in the disturbances.

[REDACTED]

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Nicaragua: Cuban-oriented terrorists may again be active.

Last week, a well-planned and well-executed bank robbery resulted in the machine-gun slaying of a police guard. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the robbery was the work of four or five men believed to be members of the Sandinist National Liberation Front (FSLN), a pro-Castro guerrilla organization named for a national hero killed by police in the 1930s.

This is the first such incident credited to the FSLN since a series of similar robberies during 1966-67. The relative lull in FSLN activities followed a government crackdown last year that eliminated some activists and drove others into hiding.

Although the FSLN is handicapped by its small numbers, weak organization, and the effective national guard, some hard-core elements are probably capable of continuing periodic hit-and-run attacks as long as they successfully elude President Somoza's security forces. [REDACTED]

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NOTE

France: Center candidates were most successful in Sunday's elections for approximately one third of the 283-seat Senate, thus confirming the conservative composition of that body. The Communists, who were heavy losers in the National Assembly elections last June as the result of a massive government campaign against them, gained four seats for a total of 15. The official Gaullist party won only 14 seats, a gain of two. The Gaullists have always had difficulty maintaining a solid base in local and regional politics, which are the determining factor in Senate elections. [REDACTED]

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